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Farm Advertising

F. H. JETER

N. C. State College of Agriculture and Engineering, N. C. State Department of Agriculture, N. C. Agricultural Experiment Station, and U. S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperating

Agricultural Extension Service

B. W. KILGORE, Director
Raleigh and West Raleigh.

ONE WAY TO ADVERTISE THE FARM

FARM ADVERTISING

By F. H. JETER, *Agricultural Editor, Agricultural Extension Service*

With the coming of improved methods of farming in North Carolina, ere is offered the progressive man an opportunity to make his farm- g, especially the marketing of his products, a better business propo- tion.

One of the principal means of injecting business methods into farm- g, aside from the keeping of careful records showing the profits and

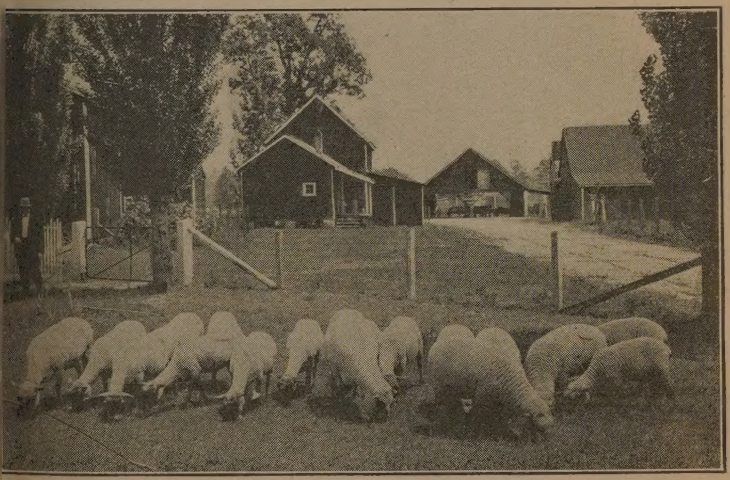


FIG. 1—A farm name means farm pride. (This view gives evidence of the well-kept condition of Cotton Valley Farm in Edgecombe County.)

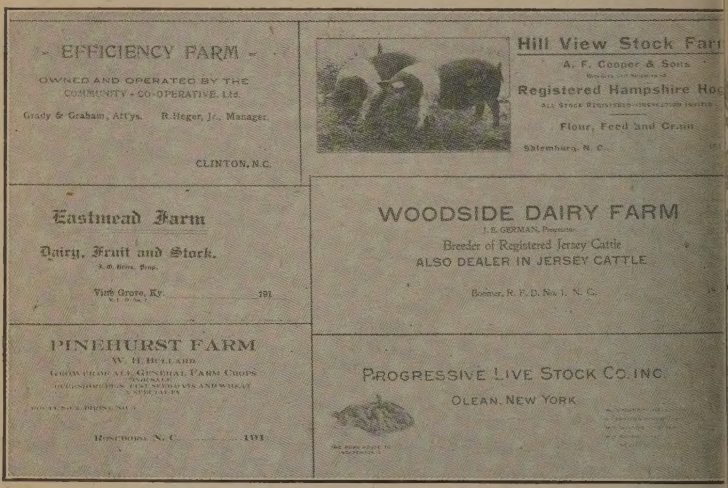
sses, the cost and returns, and the investments and proceeds, is the use f progressive advertising methods.

Advertising has proven its value in all the big business projects. It annot be called a failure. The biggest and most successful industrial oncerns have realized long ago that to be successful, that is, to be able o pay dividends on the money invested, and to dispose of their produce atisfactorily, they must advertise. Large agencies have been built up or the purpose of placing and handling the advertising business of these oncerns, and practically every large business organization has its ad- ertising manager.

We who buy on the market today know that certain things are more lesirable than others. We believe that these articles of merchandise

will suit our conditions. This thought has been ingrained upon o brain largely by the cleverness of some person who knew how to s forth the virtues of his wares in an attractive way.

It is claimed by those who have studied the question thoroughly th advertising actually cuts the cost of goods rather than increases th



Some types recently received by the writer.

J. H. SMITH J. H. SMITH, JR

CIRCLE GROVE FARM

REGISTERED GUERNSEY CATTLE, DUROC JERSEY HOGS, BARRED PLYMOUTH ROCK POULTRY, SOYBEANS, AND LATHAM'S DOUBLE SEEDCORN

R. F. D. NO. 1
BELHAVEN, N. C.

A good type to use, being simple, dignified and inexpensive.

FIG. 2—Well-printed letterhead stationery shows progressive business enterprise.

as it is supposed to do by many who are opposed to advertising. Th logic of this can readily be seen when it is considered that the materi to be sold can be disposed of more easily when widely advertised tha when it is not. In this way the cost of distribution is cut considerabl by the distributor being able to dispose of his goods with the minimu of effort on his part. If, on the other hand, he did not advertise an did not give the public a clear idea of the product, he would probabl have to organize a more complicated selling machine, overcome th indifference and inertia of the buyer by personal salesmen, and othe wise add greatly to the cost of putting the product in the hands of th buyers.

Old, well-established concerns, believing in bygone methods and of ete systems of business management, have sometimes been content to along in the same old way, depending upon the quality of their goods ne to attract buyers. Some of them have waked up too late to the alization that most of their business has been lost, and so have gone o bankruptcy. Others, seeing the footsteps of customers turning ards those doors wherein the owners believed in the policy of legiti-

. 3—This barn sign aids in selling Herefords, the owner considering it about as essential as the herd. (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chicago, Ill.)

ate advertising, have changed their policy to conform to these new eas, and have saved themselves just in the nick of time.

Advertising pays, and pays big, and all signs indicate that one of the g advertisers of the future will be the farmer. It is becoming self-ident that the products of the soil need advertising as much as does y manufactured commodity. Many people have thought for a long ne that these farm products did not need to be advertised and, in fact, at they could not be advertised. They know better now, because ere has been so many advertising successes in this new field that there no longer any doubt about its application. In fact, it has been re-atedly demonstrated that there is not so much difference between lvertising farm products and those from industrial plants. Experi-ce has shown that those principles which are involved in industrial lvertising are also involved in farm advertising, and that the pitfalls be avoided in an industrial advertising campaign must also be oided in the advertising of farm produce.

It is a well-known fact that advertising makes a producer look more the quality of his goods. It forces him to grade his produce, thereby ing a standard for the guidance of the consumer. It also stabilizes e market, because it helps to establish an equilibrium between the pply of goods and the demand.

Advertising Best Suited to Specialized Farming

It must be remembered, however, that advertising pays better for t specialized farmer than it does for the man engaged in general farmi Advertising also pays the man best who has some special aptitude producing a certain thing better than any other. For instance, if certain farmer is a good corn grower and produces seed corn superi to that commonly grown in his territory, he should make this prod his main one for advertising purposes. Similarly, if another man w a good live-stock grower, he should go in for pure-bred breeding anima Every man has the ability to produce some one thing possibly bet than his neighbor. If he could realize on this, making it the basis his business thought, then he is in a position to realize money on l investment.

Name the Farm

There are many ways in which to advertise. Any man, to make success out of his business, m use his brain. In the busin of farming, after finding o what can be done best, then *name* should be given to t farm. This name should, in way, typify the place or its chi product. Any farm so nam immediately becomes more th a collection of acres, but a vit sacred spot into which we c work our own personalities. T farm name gives the place ind viduality and dignity. H much easier it is to reach a far by asking for one with the di nified name such as "Pinehu Farm," "Woodside Da Farm," or "Cedar Hill Farm than it is to inquire for "B Jones' place," which lies to t left of the "old Smith farm."

Fig. 4—A neat entrance on a main highway. The sign is illuminated at night. (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chicago, Ill.)

As an example of how a nam may be selected, on the farm Hon. F. P. Latham at Belhaven, N. C., there is a circle of large o trees just in front of the dwelling. Taking his cue from the form tion of this grove, Mr. Latham has aptly called his farm *"Circle Gro Farm,"* and has had stationery printed on which this name is use *"Circle Grove Farm"* is much easier designated than the *"old Latha*

ace." Contrasted with this is a farm near Raleigh known as "Trinity airy" because it was at one time selected as a probable site for Trinity ollege, and the owner is a dairyman. In like manner there is another ace known as "Jersey Fruit Farm." This name immediately conveys the mind a picture of well-fed Jerseys grazing contentedly under

FIG. 5—This sign sells Shorthorns. It aids the customer to find the place. (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chicago, Ill.)

ie spreading branches of well-laden apple trees. As a matter of fact, iese are two things for which the farm is known.

North Carolina has a wealth of old Indian names from which might e selected an appropriate farm name.

USE PRINTED STATIONERY

As stated, there are many good names available for the farm. There re names which the place itself suggests or the method of farming sug- ests; and after this name has been selected, *good letter-head stationery hould be used* showing the farm name in large type and the name of the wner or owners in smaller type at each corner above or in a line below. dded to that could be one or two lines under the farm name calling ttention to that which it produces, and showing at once to the reader hat the farmer is a successful business man; showing also that in spite f his overalls he has a good deal more money invested in his place

than has some *two-by-four* merchant in town who sells his goods a depends almost entirely on advertising for his success.

After naming the farm, this name should then be given some caref publicity. A carefully lettered sign on the front gate, a small half-to photograph on his letterhead, a dignified advertisement in the loc

FIG. 6—A neat entrance goes well with the farm name. (Courtesy Extension Division, Purdue University.)

paper, lettering on the mail box, a tasty sign-post down next to the ro may all be used. The whole idea is to acquaint the community wi the identity of the farm, associating it with the name of the own Several men have used a large sign on top of the barn, or on the si of the barn, with good success. This is valuable, for instance, where railroad runs behind the place or the main road is some distance aw and it is desirable to have this local advertising.

In the matter of names, it is generally best to have identificati

ather than advertising, as the main object. The advertising had best e obtained in other ways so as not to impair the dignity of the home.

Local Advertising

For local advertising, one of the best methods is in the use of the ocal papers; after the local paper would come roadside signs or bulletin boards. Both of these are of especial value for local sales or for selling directly to passers-by. One of the neatest little signs that I have seen was a small board suspended from a trim-looking post, and hanging out over the road so that it might be seen by travelers going both ways. This sign was suspended by a metal rod, and contained on it the name of the farm at the top with the name of the proprietor just under, and a *"for sale"* list below this.

Fig. 7—Though off the main road for one-uarter of a mile, Spring Grove Farm is not verlooked because of this sign on the main high-ay. Note the small blackboards for advertising urposes. (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chi-ago, Ill.)

Another neat little sign that I have seen was placed just over a ublic watering trough on the side of the road. This farmer lives one ile back of the road, and at a junction of the road that leads from his lace to the main thoroughfare there is a tub of pure water which runs own from a spring on the bluff above. Here he has placed a neat atering trough above which a large signboard has been built. When e has anything to sell he informs the public in neat lettering upon this oard, and it has been the means of disposing of hundreds of dollars orth of products which would otherwise have been wasted or would ave necessitated many trips to town for marketing.

In *Farm and Fireside* a good article prepared by Mr. E. I. Farring-on, relative to roadside advertising, recently appeared. Because this ums up the question of this phase of farm advertising it is given in full:

ROADSIDE ADVERTISING REALLY PAYS

"Whatever else may be said for the automobile, it has helped many armers get better prices for their truck and produce. This fact has een especially appreciated since labor has been hard to get and ship-ing facilities have been generally upset.

"There are sections where practically all the small fruit, apples, ears, and vegetables have been sold at the door. The writer knows one nan whose sales on a Saturday have run to almost $50. This was in arly summer, when peas and beans were in great demand. In the fall, rders for apples and other products to be used during the winter have

amounted to more than $50 a day. A woman who has been raisi
berries in a small town put an advertising sign at her gate and d
posed of her crop, $500 worth, mostly raspberries and strawberries.

"When this movement began, almost any kind of sign was sufficie

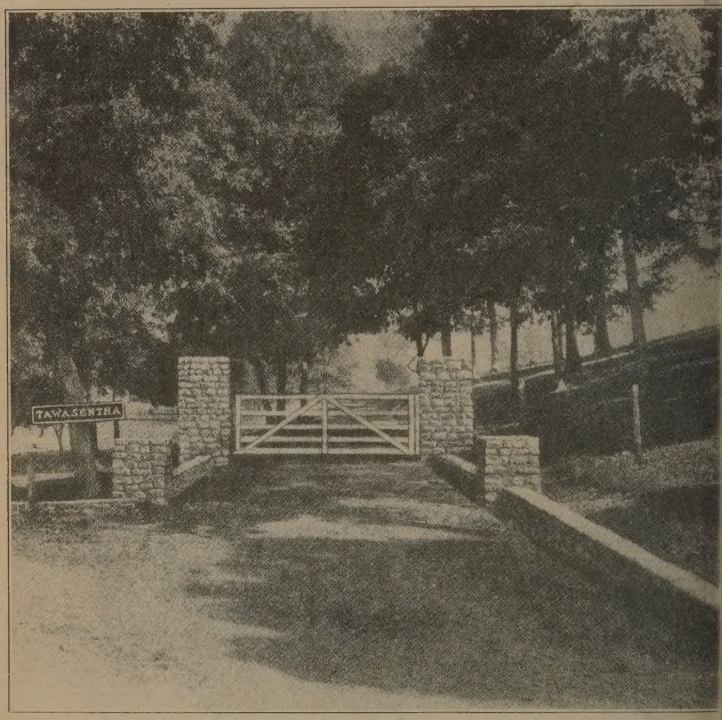


FIG. 8—A beautiful farm entrance. (Courtesy Missouri State Board of Agriculture.)

to attract customers. Now competition is becoming keener. There
sections where goods are displayed at almost every farmhouse gate
miles, or, if no goods are shown, a sign advertising them is seen. Buy
are more discriminating than they were.

"To get trade the farmer must be businesslike, careful as to quali
and enterprising in his methods. A blackboard on which the da
offerings are quoted is fairly satisfactory, if it can be arranged to m
the eye of the automobile driver as he comes up the street. Signs t
face the road are often overlooked. Probably the best way is to
two signs, setting them back to back at the side of the road in the sha
of a tent. Then they can hardly escape motor drivers from b
directions.

"An easy sign to use is one consisting of a frame into which panels may be slipped. If one has a set of panels bearing the names of all the articles offered for sale during the season, it is only necessary to slip into place the panel advertising those on hand each morning. One farmer on a state highway has made an extra bid for trade by erecting a large bulletin board of this type, with a conspicuous weathercock at the top. The wooden rooster, turning with the wind, is pretty sure to catch the eyes of those who pass. Another farmer has evolved an even more original sign. He specializes in poultry products, and has hung a broad board over the street in front of his house, this board having an imitation hen's nest fastened to it, with real eggs that have been blown fastened to the board higher up. The effect is that of a hen's nest heaped with eggs. It is most ingenious.

FIG. 9—Mr. Bean lives half a mile from the main road, but his neighbors know where to find him. (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chicago, Ill.)

"In Franklin County, Kansas, Frank Pyle has been advertising apple juice with a big sign in front of the house. This beverage can be handled very profitably at the door. Even cider mills are now putting out advertising signs to catch the eyes of passers.

"There are ways of using advertising signs which are sometimes overlooked. While they serve to bring trade for roasters, eggs, broilers, vegetables, and fruit, there is no reason why they shouldn't also attract customers for cheese, jelly, piccalilli, jam, or even puppies.

"Of course, selling at the door involves more or less work, depending on the amount of custom. The farmer who raises only a few crops in large amounts will prefer shipping in the regular way. It is when one has a miscellaneous lot of products to dispose of that roadside selling becomes most desirable. Then the good wife or daughter must help with the work. They must know how to make change quickly, and must have a pleasant way of meeting people. Sometimes people to whom casual sales are made come to be regular customers to whom shipments can be made the year round. It pays to have some circulars printed to be given out at the roadside stands, especially if one wishes to build up a parcel-post business.

"This is just one form of advertising, perhaps the simplest of all. There is no reason why the farmer should not use the newspapers and the mails. The writer receives regularly the announcements of a farmer

north of Chicago who produces a large amount of honey. This ma finds he can make more money by selling his honey to a retail trade i 12-pound cans or larger than by selling wholesale. He has a long lis of names which he circularizes each year, cutting them off when n response is received for a certain length of time. He started his lis and keeps it fresh by advertising in one or two Chicago papers. Thi method is not expensive, for only a small, clean-cut advertisement i used. Moreover, it gets excellent results.

"Advertising in newspapers is sometimes pronounced a failure b farmers who have tried it. The explanation is usually easy when on reads the ads of these men. Merely filling up space is not really adver tising. To sell goods by mail you must give a little thought to th subject. It stands to reason that the prospective customer does not wan to enter into any prolonged correspondence. The best advertising i that which tells the whole story, so that no return letter is necessary Your advertisement should go straight to the subject, and tell the stor completely in as few words as possible.

"Take an advertisement like this, for example:

A No. 1 Jonathan apples for sale. $5.00 a barrel. Delivered at your door in three days.

That tells all the customer wants to know. If he wants a barrel of Jonathan apples and doesn't consider the price too high, he will mail you a check immediately. You will perhaps write him a note of acknowledgment, and will put his name on your books for future circulars. On the other hand, you will get little results from an advertisement which reads:

APPLES FOR SALE.
Write the undersigned for prices.

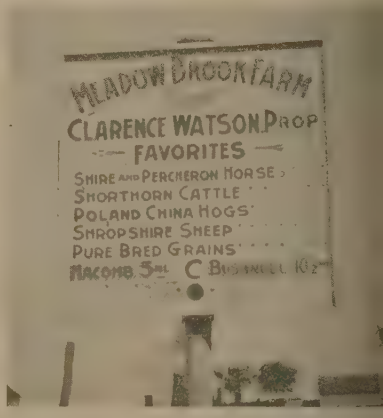


FIG. 10—This sign sells lots of produce. M Watson lists his special sale stuff as "Favorites (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chicago, Ill.)

The first ad will bring ten answers to one from the other.

"Every farmer who undertakes work of this kind should use a typ writer. The average man dislikes to puzzle out a pen scrawl. A typ written letter makes a good impression, which is half the battle. printed letter-head giving your full name and address looks busines like too. This may seem like too much attention to details, but th experience of many points to the fact that it pays, and pays well.

"The question of prices is one over which there has been much di agreement, even among farmers. Some of the latter believe goods sol

t the door should bring retail prices. They claim that it requires more ime to sell in this way than to pack and ship. They point out, too, nat some member of the family must be ready at all times to wait on ustomers, thus neglecting some other duty. Prices charged should not e wholesale prices by any means. Yet it is best to have them a little ower than those charged by the best city stores. In this way the farm-rs obtain an increased profit for themselves, and yet encourage people rom the city to visit their farms.—*E. I. Farrington.*"

Numbers of farmers have placed advertising in their local papers, r in their agricultural papers, with considerable success. One man aid seventy-four cents for a small space and reported that he sold 815 worth of cattle from such a small ad, and then had to turn down everal inquiries. *The farm paper offers a good medium for disposing f a considerable amount of one particular product.* Circular letters nd post cards aid in this way also.

In this day of parcel post marketing, packages having on them the ame of the farm, the grade of the produce offered, and put up in a nice ackage has been the means of making permanent customers. Because f competition, however, it is necessary that the package be a little etter, the goods of a little higher quality than those of the neighbors, nd that all engagements be met promptly.

Well-arranged farm exhibits at the different fairs offer a good oppor-unity for advertising the farm. Appropriate labels attached to the ifferent products will aid in this method. Good seed corn, for instance, roperly labeled would quickly attract attention and be the means of ecuring orders for delivery later.

Use the Typewriter

Every farmer needs a desk and typewriter. Both may be cheap, yet hey are needed as a place in which to keep the accounts of the farm nd by which to write letters and statements. From having answered he requests of many thousands of farmers, those in charge of the pub-ications of the Extension Service and Experiment Station would prefer o handle ten typewritten letters to one that is written in long hand. Generally this comes written with pencil on a piece of paper torn from he tablet of the school children. A carefully prepared typewritten etter is a sign of business progress, and no man would hesitate to ecommend the quality of produce from a farmer who had written such t letter on well-printed stationery showing the name of the farm.

In addition to many of these ways of advertising which have been nentioned, there are many other minor ways such as the use of signs ainted on trucks or wagon bodies, the printing of small business cards o be handed around in town, the giving of some produce to those in a osition to reach others, and many other ways which will suggest them-elves to the man who goes into this business with his eyes open.

FIG. 11—This parcel post package sells eggs. It shows a bird's-eye view of the ranch and the extensive equipment used to put out a quality product. (Courtesy *System on the Farm*, Chicago, Ill.)

In *System on the Farm* for November, 1918, one wide-awake man ve this unique method of advertising his produce:

"To show my goods to better advantage," said a Peoria truck farmer, decided to place glass sides in my wagon. The vegetables are ar-nged on shelves behind the glass as shown on this page and makes a splay that is really attractive.

"To protect the glass, wire netting is stretched along behind it about ree inches away from the glass.

"Another feature of this wagon is that my customers can climb into and pick out the fruit or vegetables that they like. A pathway down e center of the wagon allows them to do this and helps me to get at y stock. The tiers of shelves give me as much or more carrying pacity as if they covered the whole wagon bed and are more easily ıtten at."

As has been stated, farm advertising pays. The experiences of many lvertising farmers have proven this. Some places have trebled their come, but all of them have found that whatever the form of adver-sing used, it must draw the attention, and it must be done consistently.

Make Advertisement Clear

Many farmers say that regular newspaper advertising will not pay. his has been true largely because of the methods used to gain the ader's attention. Sometimes statements are made that are actually ıtrue, or that are very much exaggerated, simply for the purpose of ıining attention. It must be remembered that a plain, simple, clear-ıt statement of actual facts is much more effective. The heading of ıe advertisement should be so worded as to gain attention and this ıould be printed in well-selected type.

Following this heading will come statements telling of the excellence ' the produce advertised, how and when it may be obtained, and finally, ıe exact address of the person so advertising. In some papers in which ırmers have inserted advertising the advertisement has been so poorly repared that it is no wonder sales have not been made, and the adver-ser consequently disappointed in his results.

Be Absolutely Honest

It must be remembered, though, in all advertising that it does not ay to try to fool any one. Service is the keynote of the world today. 'he business house that gives the greatest service gets the best trade. 'hings advertised must be as they are represented or customers are lost. 'ot only are these customers alone lost, but they in turn will cause the ss of others. There is a certain community that does most of its ading at one store. If this store were to fool one of these customers would be only a matter of time before it lost the trade of all. The roduce must be guaranteed with the integrity of the farm owner stand-ıg behind it.

And when you have begun to lead the footsteps of your neighbo to your doors you will be imitated. You will cause others to try t follow your lead, and in this way, unconsciously, you will become leader in your community, pointing the way to a greater independenc among your neighbors, and thus building up the resources of the sectio making your own farm increase in value and making it give you greate returns on the investment. You can then begin to write of the method used on your farm and give them to your papers, who will give yo good space, as well as give you greater advertising than you could ge by paying for a small space, and finally causing you to become know over the entire State as a leader in agricultural affairs.

And then, through all this, it must ever be borne in mind that th greatest AD is the spotless reputation of fair dealing, good goods, goo measure, and personal integrity and character. Without these, we ma advertise and for a while build up a business that will pay, but in th end, when a stranger asks a neighbor about us, since he has heard of u through our advertising and might wish to buy of our produce, th neighbor will shake his head and laugh one of those knowing laugh that condemns before a word is spoken, and we lose a customer. Throug him we also lose others, and through them, others, until, in the en our advertising is a millstone about our necks dragging our busine down in a mass of ruins about us. This is no preaching. It is the i exorable law of business. It is the new idea that makes business succee in the present day. It applies to the store, factory, railroad, or ban as well as the farm, and it is a great stimulus to those whose life i measured by something besides the gold dollar.

Who and What I Am

I am your friend.

I am the friend of labor.

I am the friend of capital.

I am the guiding hand of modern business.

I am the foundation of success.

I am the reason for increased demand.

I am the cause of increased sales and net profits.

I am the reason for increased stock turnover.

I am the cause of reduced overhead expenses.

I am the key to the rise in your profit curve.

I am the why and wherefore of your growth and expansion.

I am the creator of good will, satisfied customers, and repeat sales.

I am the guiding hand which tells the people who, what, and where you are.

I am ADVERTISING—a truthful, concise presentation in word or picture of the merits of things you have to sell.

United States Department of Labor

CIRCLE GROVE FARM

An Eastern Carolina Farm Home, Deriving its name from the circle of oaks in the foreground.